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Rope

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MASTERS THESIS

"Rope"

by

Genevieve L. Fox

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

MFA COMPUTER ANIMATION PROGRAM

SCHOOL OF PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTS AND SCIENCES

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Erik Timmerman, Chairperson
School of Photographic Arts and Sciences

Jack Slutzky
School of Fine and Applied Arts

Dr. Rosemary Infante
RIT Counseling Center

Rope

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"ROPE"

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Genevieve L. Fox
October 14, 1994

Acknowledgments

My many thanks go out to those who encouraged, commented, and got their hands dirty with this project. My advisors Erik Timmerman for his iron hand on making it good, Jack Slutzky for his knowledge and encouragement to tackle the subject matter, and Rosemary Infante for her strong support of the idea and very deep interpretation and comment on the content. Thank you to Larry Gibbons, videographer, for his late hours in the edit booth. Thanks to Francis Drew and Morgan Thomas for showing me the way on letting out some of the emotions involved in the piece. Thanks to Michael Sanger for strengthening my traditional animation skills through the work at Santa Fe Cartoon Company. Thanks to Michael Warren and his creative sound effects, attention to detail, and use of equipment. Thanks to James Russell for editing this paper. Thanks to Los Alamos National Laboratory and its highly supportive graduate student program for the year and a half of employment while I worked on the film. Here's to all of my fellow students and especially the Flying Evil Monkeys. Finally, thank you to Carol and John Fox and my siblings for always being there waiting to see what will happen next.

To all.

"Rope"

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I GOAL

I took a shallow dive into presenting the deepest of human emotions via filmmaking when I did my first film, "exploration of a human condition." While only somewhat successful, this first film only deepened my desire to do films that drew pictures around the realities of being human — the emotions that everyone has but no one seems able to understand or expose.

I chose depression as the emotion to center the film around. I had both witnessed and experienced the incredible feelings of hopelessness, pain, struggle, and loss that all humans feel at one time or another and wanted to try my hand at pulling these images together in a film.

II PROPOSAL

"Rope" began as a film called "Struggle." I presented the idea for "Struggle" along with two other film ideas. As Jack Slutzky reviewed my initial three proposals in late 1992, he quickly saw — and I quickly accepted the fact — that there was real substance, passion, and need in only one of the outlined ideas. Thus, the development of "Rope" began.

I wanted the film to illustrate the power we have within ourselves to remain or not remain in control. If you think of the images a rope brings, they are many and deep. A rope can be a safety line, it can be taut or slack, it can be tied securely or tied too tightly, it can be strong or weak, it can save or it can strangle, it can be used to climb up towards or away from, to escape or meet, to be held onto tightly or just let go.

For this film, I proposed to have a person in a desperate and lonely place looking for something but unable to describe or even know what that something is. A person losing all contact with what is real and what is not; first losing the physical strength and basic will and, second, losing the emotional strength to "hang on." I decided to concentrate on the internal struggle itself, on the conflicts that are so intangible in an outside world.

The most general symptoms of depression are described as:

- * Persistent sad, anxious or "empty" mood.
- * Feelings of hopelessness, pessimism.
- * Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, helplessness.
- * Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies that were once enjoyed, including sex.
- * Insomnia, early-morning awakening, oversleeping.
- * Reduced appetite and weight loss or overeating and weight gain.
- * Decreased energy, fatigue, being "slowed down."
- * Thoughts of death or suicide; suicide attempts.
- * Restlessness, irritability.
- * Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions.
- * Persistent physical symptoms that do not respond to treatment.

These descriptions are only as defining as our language can make them. I wanted to give a more sensual definition through image and sound – my version of this disease called depression.

III. TESTING

I was in a dilemma as to whether to make the main character a woman or a man — should I depict myself? Little by little I discovered that I had the character. I had been drawing him for many years in my doodles and sketches. He would appear as children, as cartoon characters, and as simple stick men. This fellow began showing up again as I thought through the piece. It was then that I realized where this character's "characteristics" were coming from. He had grown and developed as I had, as a melting-pot persona of personalities who were major factors in my life. I had taken these people and reassembled them, randomly and subconsciously, into the blonde male figure. Disheveled, lost, cold. . . the pieces made the character very real.

I did some test drawings in order to create a mood about the character. I would be doing free flow, straight ahead animation for the film and quickly synthesized a style for the character that would fit into this type of animation.

IV.

STORYBOARD

I worked hard in late 1992 to produce the final storyboard for "Rope." I had the storyboards completed by late December. I was very surprised by how much the storyboard took out of me. It was hard work putting all that I felt into it.

When I showed the storyboard to Erik Timmerman, he asked, "Are you sure you want to spend a year doing this?" In retrospect, I see why he asked that...there is a lot of internal pushing and pulling involved in producing a film of this nature and spending what ended up being a year and a half on it was quite difficult. While in production, if I tried to just "do" the work — just crank it out — the film became shallow and empty. I ended up throwing out many hours of work when I just tried plowing through it. What is left is a film that I believe embodies the strong emotion which was put into it.

V.

PRODUCTION

I left Rochester for New Mexico as soon as I fulfilled the coursework requirements for the degree. I had been offered a job as an animator at Los Alamos National Laboratory and could not pass it up. The main reason for taking the position, besides being a golden opportunity, was that I would have access to all of the best equipment to produce an animated film. I would be

able to explore many different hardware and software packages and choose the one that would best fit the film. Of course, "the best laid plans. . ." I ended up working very hard, long hours for the Laboratory, producing many minutes of animation and video and some interactive installations for the Laboratory's Science Museum. In short, the golden opportunity included everything but precious time.

In addition to my overload of regular work, I had met a veteran animator in Santa Fe. Michael Sanger took me under his wing into informal apprenticeship (i.e., slave labor). He is a veteran of the animation world, including the original Spung Buggy studio, and has freelanced in New Mexico for the last 25 years. He enlisted me to work with him on three television spots, including a nationally broadcast Pink Panther spot. I did in-betweening, inking, painting, and small amounts of full animation. This did, of course, delay the production of my own film.

When things quieted down, I shyly passed Mr. Sanger my storyboard. He gave me encouragement to do the film and looked over the storyboards and offered suggestions. The experience of working with Michael provided me with tools and resources that were priceless during the production of "Rope."

Style Decisions

The first thing I did was scan in the storyboard for the film on a Hewlett Packard ScanJet IIc using DeskScanII software. I scanned it in at screen resolution (72 dots per inch) as PICT files with the intention of making an

animatic on a Centris 650 using Macromind Director. I fell in love with the images that showed up on the computer after the scans. I had done the storyboards in nicely shaded pencil and found that, though the images were slightly sharper on the computer, they retained the mood in which they were drawn.

While assembling these storyboard frames into an animatic, I experimented with ways to animate the scenes. I soon found that retaining the feel of the pencil would require that I do each and every frame in pencil. I tried to move the images into Painter and manipulate them there. I thought that I could product the effect that animating with oil paints creates. I tried pushing the original image about the screen so that there was a halo effect in the movement. It did not work for this piece. I found it distracting and decided to try a different approach.

Well, the different approach included nothing less than a brief, yet thorough, abandonment of the entire film idea. I was discouraged by the problems I had in capturing the mood of the pencil and while in this vulnerable state I was swept away by an image on an old postcard sitting at the front of a pile at the flea market. The image was a print of Paul Klee's "Twittering Machine."

I put the card on my dashboard and stared at it for weeks. The image was so enchanting. I found I had assigned the characters personalities and produced a storyboard about ignorance and escape that centered on them.

I sent the storyboard to my thesis committee and started animating while I waited for a response. I had a great time animating the characters in MacroMedia Director 3.0. I had three scenes almost completed when I got the answer from Rochester. Erik and Jack said that the characters were shallow and the story was flat. Rosemary was disappointed that I had abandoned the film that dealt with depression.

With great reluctance I agreed with their comments and pulled out my original storyboard. Surprisingly, there was new life to the panels and I was much more capable of approaching the subject. The sabbatical I took while attempting an entirely different film gave me the strength and perspective I needed to finally tackle the original idea.

Because of the amount of software and hardware I had toyed with while preparing for this moment, I realized that I had already developed a philosophy of style for the film. I wanted it to have the feel of human touch, and I wanted to do it on the computer. I did not want to use any artwork that was not produced on the computer. No scanning of photos or drawings, no video images, no clip art — nothing but my work produced exclusively on the computer.

Although I was very adept at using MacroMind Director, I found that the process of creating each little piece of motion in a separate window, then mechanically assembling each piece to build the scene, then piecing together each frame to produce the animation did not have the quality of human touch that I required.

Platform Decisions

I continued my quest to find a package that fit this strengthened philosophy. I experimented with the 3D packages Swivel 3D and StrataStudio Pro. I found the interface, power, and basic intuitiveness of Swivel 3D to be very poor. It was slow and had limited animation capabilities. When I opened up Strata StudioPro, I was thrilled. I was able to animate in minutes. The time-line interface and the motion curves were familiar due to my use of Topaz at RIT. In addition to being intuitive, the animation capabilities were vast, the rendering was reasonable, and the modeler was very good. I would also be able to render on one of the networks at Los Alamos with an additional \$99 piece of software called RenderX. RenderX would create files that were renderable by Renderman — software commonly installed on many of the laboratory computer systems. This would infinitely speed up the process of rendering.

I built a quick model of the man and toyed with some environment models. I was disappointed to admit to myself that this was not going to do it. I was not getting the feel I wanted. I did not want my animation to be anything close to 3D. I tried experimenting with more abstract models, yet I was not satisfied with any of the results . My search continued.

I had purchased an Amiga 3000 with intentions of doing my thesis work on it. Employment at the Laboratory interrupted my experimentation with this system. I had previously upgraded the RAM to 10 megabytes (MB) and ordered Caligari Broadcast Software (3D) and had already installed Imagine 3D

software and DPaint IV. In the winter of 1994, I finally began experimenting with all three of these.

Imagine had an incredible learning curve and the renderer was extremely slow. Although Caligari Broadcast had a wonderful interface, was intuitive and rendered reasonably quickly, I found that any rendering time, without another system to work on simultaneously, took away time from animation. I also noted that the file sizes became difficult to manage without extensive external storage.

Thus, I opened up DPaintIV. I was amazed. The package offers an incredible array of 2D capabilities, can do a decent job of faking 3D, and has very good compression routines that make file management very reasonable. I particularly liked the way I could animate frame-to-frame freehand, set my extremes and in-between, or use the software's ability to pick up any image off the screen, paste it back down, and use a control dialogue to move the image a certain distance across the screen during a certain number of frames and even rotate the image in XYZ space. This "in-betweening" function even offered ease-in and ease-out control. This was terrific for setting up motion that I could then go back to frame by frame and draw over fluidly, creating that "human touch" style I had been striving for.

I think that scurrying around for 6 months trying to find a suitable platform also had another purpose. It seemed that I had lost the edge that prompted me to want to make the film in the first place. Upon moving to New Mexico, I had to shut out all of the influences that formed the original images. The

time spent searching for the right platform allowed me to process all of the emotion involved, and I returned to my film with a strong perspective. Another proven case of coming "full-circle."

So, . . . there I was. I had cut out the middleman (the renderers, the storage devices, the scanners, and the external images) and sat down in front of my 3000 to produce a film. It was incredible how everything came together that first night of serious animation. It was a cold, rainy spring night, and I was very alone. I took a walk through the empty streets of Los Alamos, in the rain, and tried to feel what it was really like all over again. It was like embarking on a journey with no one to see you off and no one, including yourself, knowing where you are going.

As the production continued, I found the storyboards to be priceless guides. I found that, other than the original images in the storyboard, I would sometimes come up with the setting for a scene in my dreams and would have to get up at night and write it down or draw it. I found that having the computer at home was both good and bad: good for such midnight drawing sessions, bad because there was no getting away from it.

I set up the screen size in DPaintIV to 480 x 320 pixels (medium resolution) with a palette of 4096 colors. This allowed me to play back the animation frames at any rate up to 30 frames per second, gave me a very nice range of colors, kept my file sizes manageable, and gave me a resolution that was nicely transferable to videotape.

Most of the scenes were under 1 MB in size, and I would store them on diskette in duplicate for safety. I would keep as much as I could on the hard drive until I could go to videotape. I was fortunate to have a disk drive that would format to 1.6 MB in order to handle the larger files. Many of the difficult scenes were larger than that so I used the software's ability to store designated frames, like 1-30 then 31-60, in separate files. I could later re-open the file with the first sequence of frames and append the file with the second sequence to recreate the original long sequence.

I continued and continued until I had 72 separate files stored on floppy disks. In all, about 50 MB of distinct files.

Transfer to Video

In order to short-circuit any potential disaster such as losing the work (I live in a place that is among the top 10 areas for lightning strikes in the country, in addition to living in a very old house with faulty wiring and a tendency to leak during the tremendous thunderstorms that seemed to occur every day just as I got off work to go home and animate), I would transfer my animation to videotape as soon as possible.

In order to accomplish the video transfer, I would hook up the video-out port on the Amiga to the video-in on a Sony 950 3/4" SP video player/recorder. That is the beauty of the Amiga. The computer is manufactured to be fully compatible with video signal. I consider this another elimination of the middleman (this time being a video card or some other device that bridges

the gap between most computers and video). (Note: Now there are a plethora of computers available that have the ability to go directly to video tape. These were not available when I was a student at RIT and only truly became available after I was far into the piece.)

With this video connection I could view the computer screen on a Sony 13" color monitor. I controlled the output to tape by loading the file into DPaintIV software and cueing the videotape. I was able to play the files in real-time and could loop them during the captures. This allowed pre-roll time on the video tape and gave me some kind of insurance that I did a good capture with a nice time-code buffer on both sides of the required segment. I would then save the original animation files in duplicate to diskette and erase them from the hard drive.

The recording sessions went very well until I realized one very important limitation of my set-up: There was no way for me to precisely register the position of the window on the output screen from one recording session to another. This caused some real problems. Any scenes that I had laid down in a previous session that registered to a new scene would have to be re-recorded. I set up a special file to try to register the scenes precisely but the risk was too great. It was much easier to re-record all the scenes that had to match in each video transfer session than it was to chance a registration problem in edit.

Changes

With the help of my advisors and my surrogate advisors (Mike Sanger and Morgan Thomas), I made changes and clarifications to the original storyboards and to the important scenes in the movie. The piece began as a pouring out of my feelings, and upon my own re-interpretation and the interpretation of others, it became more and more concrete.

I rearranged some of the images and also followed my intuition on doing straight-ahead animation of the surreal scenes. The results of this approach were startling. Although some of the straight-ahead work was left unused, it laid the foundation for other sequences that ended up in the piece. It was interesting that all of the important scenes were accomplished only after severe anguish over their content and sleepless nights trying to get them out. I would work and work until I let myself sleep and would have to sometimes brace myself when I went to check the scene the next day. It was an interesting process.

The most basic mistake I made was not setting up the audience during the first minute of the film. I had a very long sequence of rain with a car driving in and stopping, shutting off the motor and turning off the lights. The sign is buzzing and the rain is coming down. The person in the car just sits there like a lost soul would, not making a decision, not knowing why he is there — just a being in his own personal hell. Well, that is what I saw. . . but I really did not let anyone else in on my secret. . . . I failed to realize that I had no objectivity on the scene. I needed to give my viewers more clues as to who

the person in the car was and what was going on with him. With additional shots of the person that show some definitive body motion, the mood of the scene is much more obvious. This brings the viewer in much more rapidly and thus gives a foundation for the scenes that follow.

VI.

POST PRODUCTION

Another part of the basic philosophy of my approach to the piece was the editing style. I had access to many special video effects, down to the simple fade in and fade out yet decided that a straight cut-to-cut style was what I wanted. I did breach this stance at the fade-up and out of the title and the fade-in of the initial scene. I tried to cut out of the title to black then cut back into the rain scene. It didn't work. Coming from black caused too much of a hard, harsh impact, so I softened them with the fades.

Video Editing

After the first transfer of animation to videotape, I enlisted the help of a fellow employee, videographer Larry Gibbons, to edit with me. He was a master at the controls of the broadcast booth available to me for off-hours use. I wanted him to let me have the controls so that he did not have to be in the booth with me at all times, but he insisted that his time was mine and there was no problem. Therefore, instead of having to spend energy on the technical part of editing, I got to sit back and call the shots.

I sent the first 15 scenes to my advisors for feedback. Overall, all three of the advisors seemed to approve of the style and direction of the piece. This gave me wonderful incentive to forge ahead.

Because I closely followed the original storyboard and its additions (from the straight-ahead animation), the video editing went well. In all, I was getting the film I had envisioned through the storyboard.

I had the help of Larry Gibbons up until the editing of the final sequences. It was Labor Day weekend, and I did not have access to the edit suite. I was able to access two 3/4" SP machines in another area of the building, and set out to finish the piece on my own. I sort of felt like the guy in the movie. . .

I did not realize how difficult it would be to edit the motion of the rope. The subtle differences between the frames made it agonizing. I worked an additional 20 hours during this weekend trying to get the final edit. I also had some trouble with a time code break at the end of my tape and was delayed for a day trying to find the best way to correct the problem.

Soundtrack

As the final edit was waiting to be finished, I enlisted the help of Michael Warren, a musician and overall technical wizard, for the composition of the sound track. I had accessed a library of sound effects and had chosen (with the advice of Erik Timmerman) a track of Billie Holiday's called "Gloomy Sunday." What a powerful song. The lyrics were very much what I had tried

to capture in the animation and the music gave an eerie, 1940's feel to the film. We made preliminary recordings of each separate sound effect on a TASCAM 424 PortaStudio 4-track cassette recorder directly from a Technics SLPG300 compact disc player.

Upon cataloging our choices for each effect, we set out to sync the audio and video. I had a 1/2" dub of the edited piece, and we were able to set cue points to the fourth of the four tracks on the audio tape by playing the video and calling out the sequences and important cuts as they occurred. We then proceeded to lay down the appropriate effects, as needed, on the other three tracks, using the recorded voices and the video as cues.

We ended up having to use the fourth track for some of the effects as the layering got more involved. Michael then mixed down the four tracks to the single channel so that I could lay them down on videotape. He also put extra recordings of each separate effect on this final tape in case I needed them in edit.

We made a very important aesthetic decision during the recording. The transition of the action from the real world to the surreal was carried by processing the sounds coming from the diner through a DSP ZOOM Advanced Effects Processor and having the Billie Holiday piece come up and play cleanly throughout the surreal sections. In all, I am very happy with the magnitude to which the sound track supports the piece.

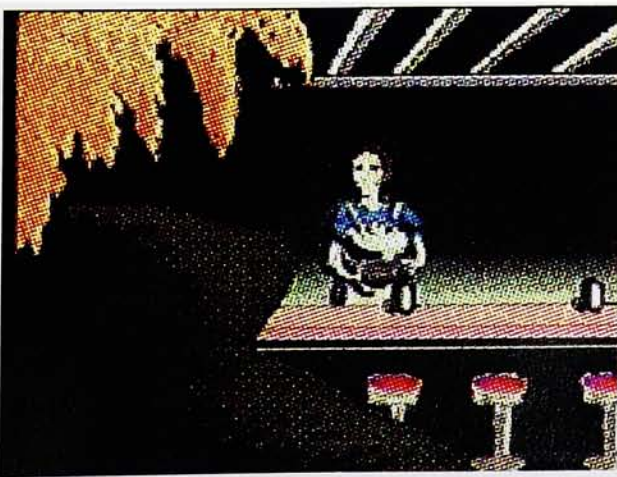
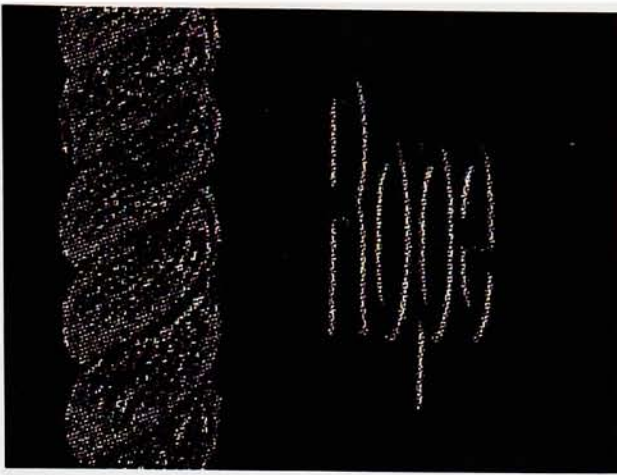
VI. CONCLUSIONS

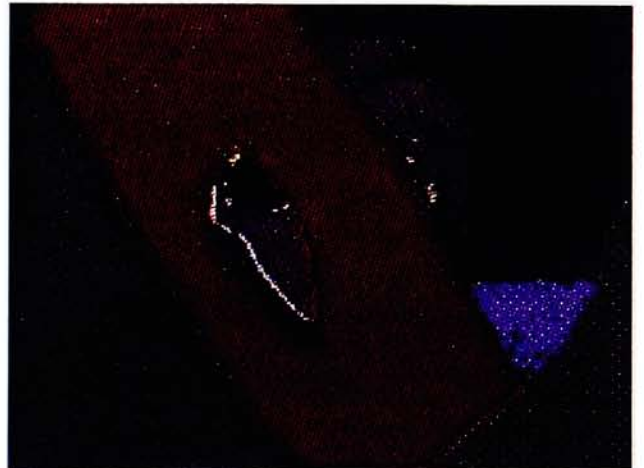
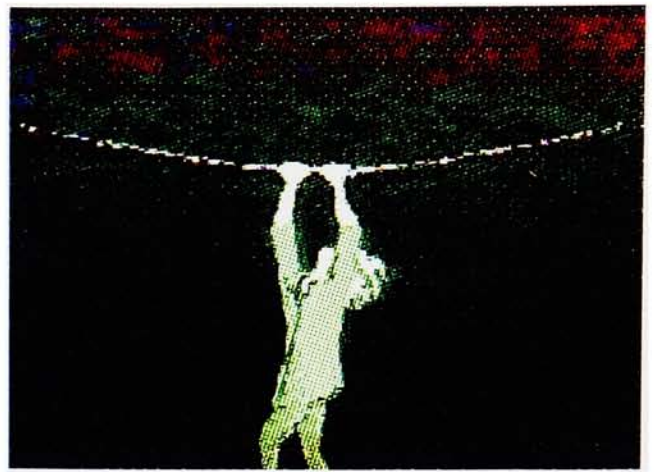
I am very happy with the film. I set out to produce a film on human emotion and have come away with that film. I am happy with the style of the film. I had such a wide array of platforms and software to choose from it was overwhelming, yet in trusting my intuition and philosophy of style, I chose the correct combination.

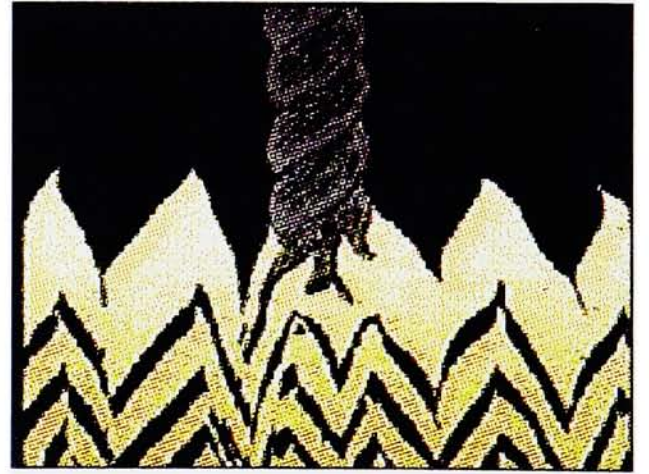
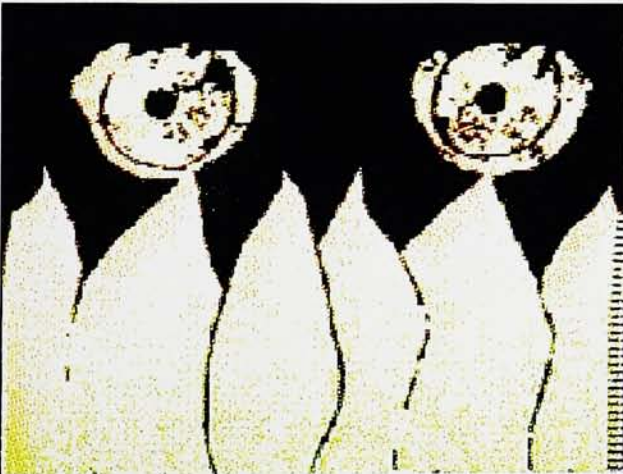
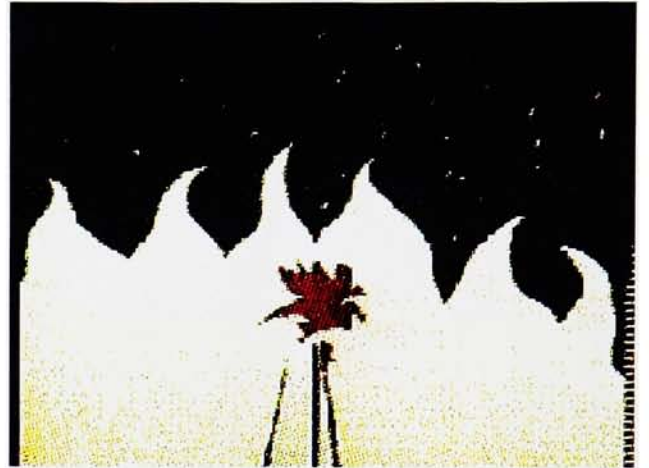
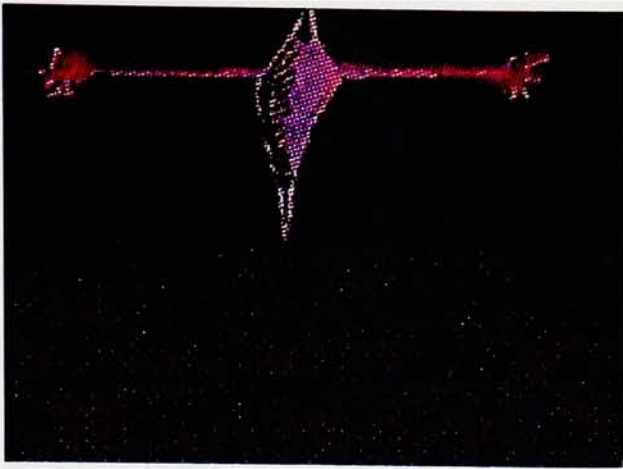
It was difficult taking a demanding full-time job, moving away from Rochester, and trying to do a thesis with a long distance support system. I ended up pulling myself completely out of the atmosphere of the school and fellow students and had to recreate an atmosphere in New Mexico in order to gear up and do the film.

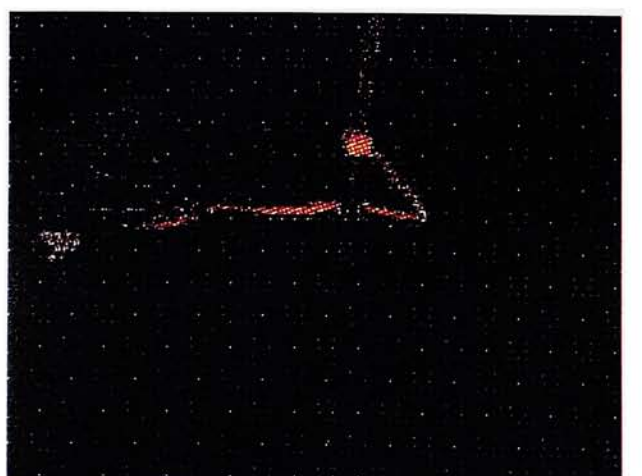
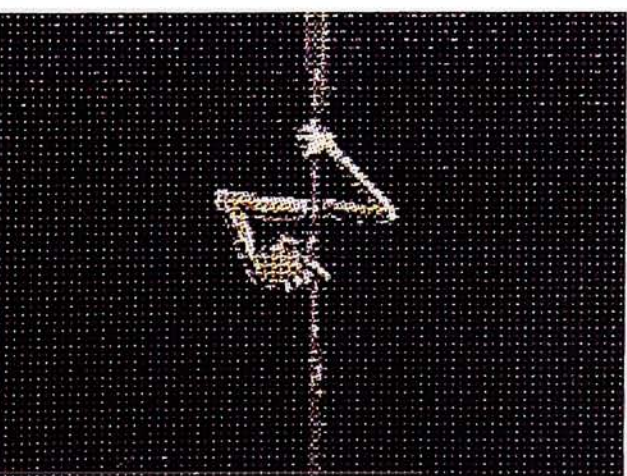
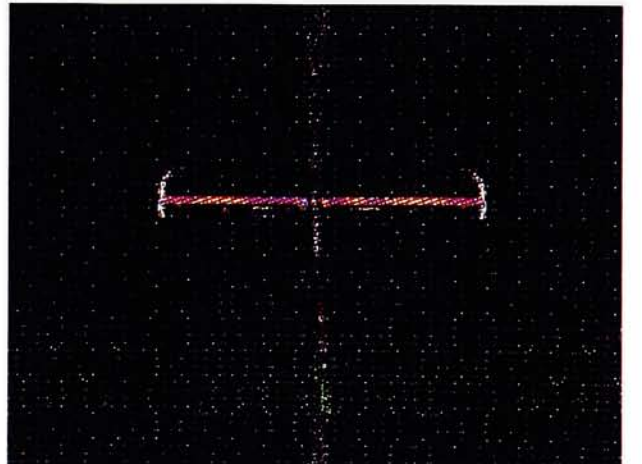
During the production there were some very distinct highs and lows. I know that they were brought on by both the content and the scope of the work and were all part of the incredible process.

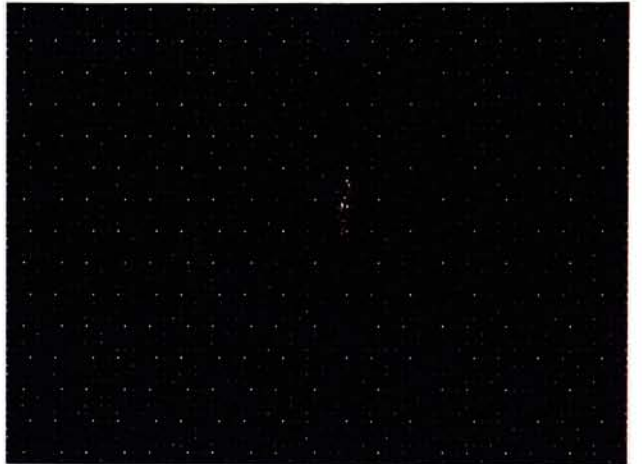
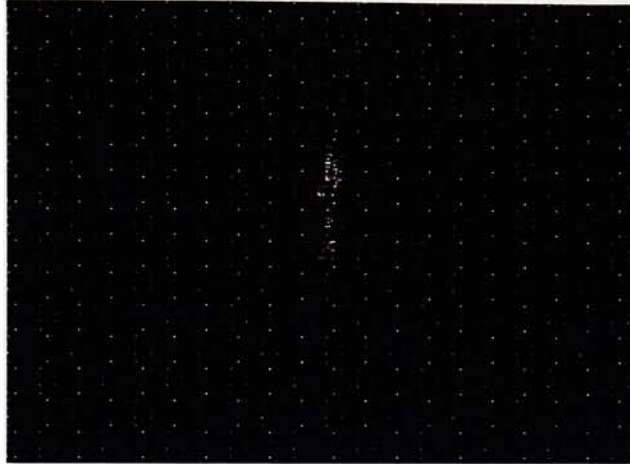
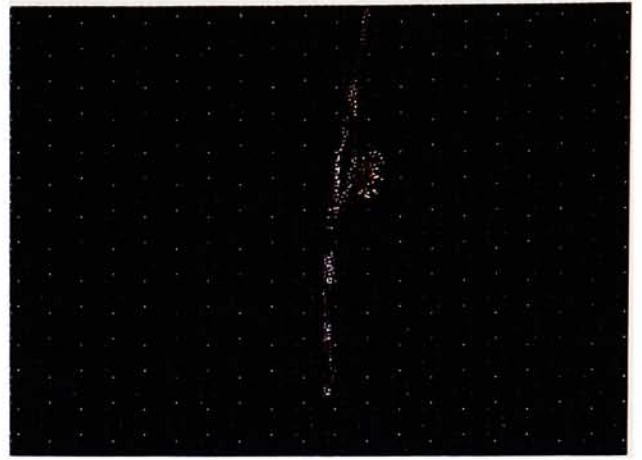
I'm Hanging On...





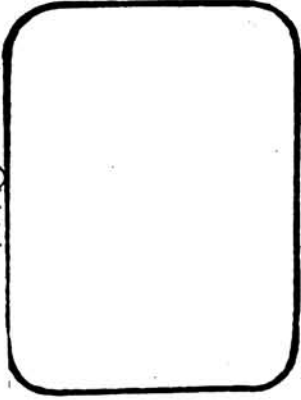








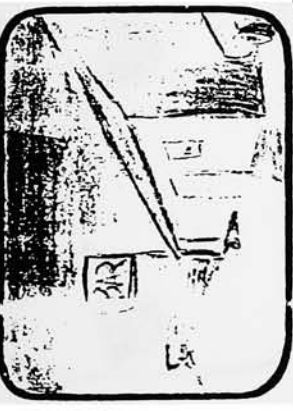
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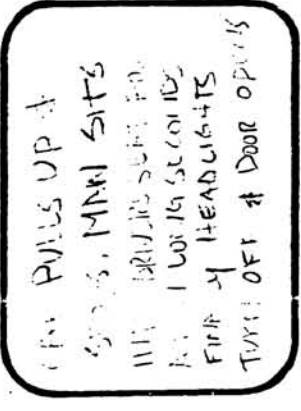
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1 LS LIGHT RAINING | EXT
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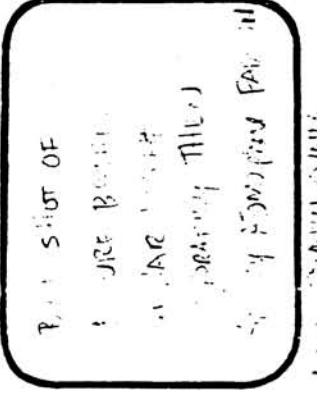


MAN PULLS UP A
SHOES, MAN SITS
IN BRIDGE SEAT FOR
A LONG SECOND
FIRE HEADLIGHTS
TURN OFF & DOOR OPENS

MAN AT BRIDGE SEAT
IN Puddle & Rain
AUDIO: RAIN - CRR-NEUSIGN
Puddle FOOTSTEPS



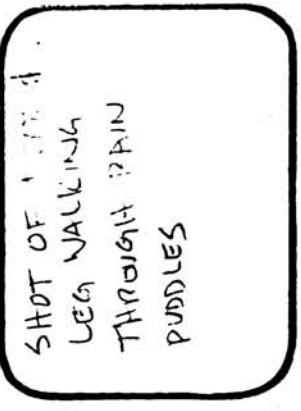
5 CU AT TAVN
DOOR



SHOT OF
DOOR BEING
OPENED
THEN
DOOR CLOSING



2 MCU EXTERIOR
TAVN

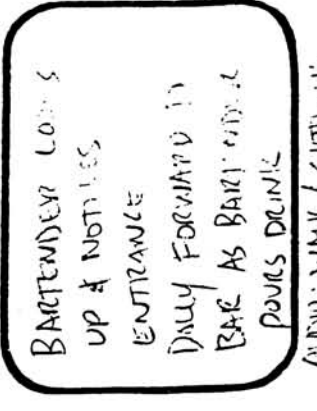


SHOT OF
LEG WALKING
THROUGH RAIN
PUDDLES

AUDIO - FOOTSTEPS IN
RAIN - FADE IN
SOUND FROM INSIDE TAVN



6 MS: INTERIOR TAVN
(LOOKING OVER HIS SHOULDER)

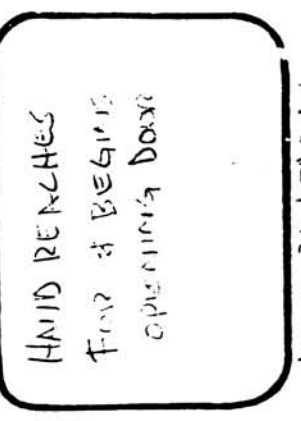


BARTENDER LOOKS
UP & NOTICES
ENTRANCE
DAILY FORWARD IN
BAR AS BARTENDER
POURS DRINK

AUDIO: MUSIC / CLOTHES

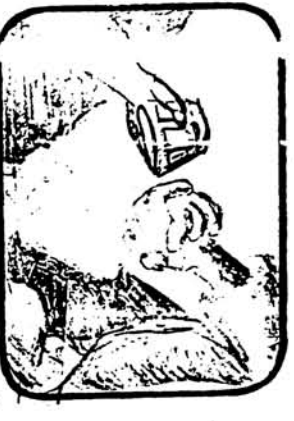


3 CU EXTERIOR AT
DOOR OF TAVN



HAND REACHES
FOR & BEGINS
OPENING DOOR

AUDIO - RAIN FADING
INTO TAVN
MUSIC / GUNSHOT



7 MCU INTERIOR TAVN
LOOKING DOWN

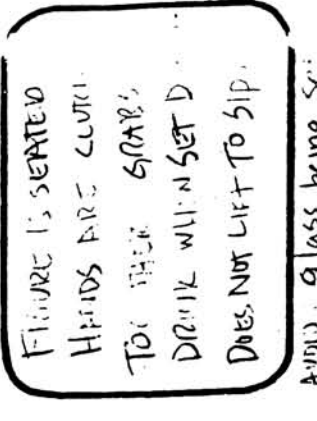


FIGURE IS SEATED
HANDS ARE CLUTCHING
TOO TIGHT GRABBS
DRINK WILL NOT SET
DOES NOT LIFT TO SIP

AUDIO: Glass being set



8 MCU CAMERA PAN
RIGHT TO FRONTAL
VIEW

THE MAN'S EYES ARE
FIXED. HE IS
STARING INTO ANOTHER
WORLD

AUDIO: BEE STINGS DROPPED
ON THE MAN'S HEAD



9 CU FIGURES EYES

TERROR IN EYES

AUDIO: MUSIC BECOMES MORE
TENSE



10 MCU: ANOTHER
WORLD (AW)

CAMERA FADIES TO
A THIN ROPE
SUSPENDED IN SPACE
WITH HANDS TRYING
TO HANG ON

AUDIO:



11 MCU: AW

A DESPERATE IMAGE
OF THE MAN BEING
PULLED INTO A
WORLD

AUDIO:



12 CU: AW

FINGERS SLIPPING -
ONE HAND THEN
TWO HANDS LOOSES



13 LS: AW

FIGURE FALLS
THROUGH
SPACE



14 MS: AW

WHILE FALLING THE
FIGURE BECOMES MORE
SKELETAL & ITS
CLOTHING IS TORN
AWAY

AUDIO: MUSIC BECOMES
TENSE



15 MS: AW / GROUND
LEVEL

FIGURE FALLS STRAIGHT
INTO A SANDY
AREA

AUDIO: MUSIC



MS: AW GROUND LEVEL

FIGURE BEGINS TO
SEE THEM SLOWLY
A LOT UP. IT
APPEARS TO BE
VERY ALONE

AUDIO: WORLD SLOWLY
UP



MS: AW

ONE OF THE DANCERS
GONE, VERY CLOSE
& LEADS TO FOR ITS
MASSIVE... HERE...

AUDIO: FADING TO



LS AW

LONG TAKE IN
THE SPOT
HIGHLIGHTS

AUDIO: WIND



He almost drowns
in the swirl of
the dancers ~ he
panics then snaps
back to the uniform
of the waitress.

100



MS: AW

FIGURE CONSIDERS.
HE'S FINCHER &
CHECKS WIND TO
DECIDE WHICH WAY
TO GO - HE BEGINS
TO WALK WITH THE WIND

AUDIO: WIND



CU: INTERIOR TAVERN

MAN'S EYES IN
CLOSEUP. THEY ARE
FIXED STILL
DISSOLVE TO
ANOTHER WORLD

AUDIO: TAVERN FADING TO



MS: AW

SUDDENLY A GROUP
OF STRANGERS
APPEAR & START
DANCE AROUND
THEY CHANGE FROM
THEY DANCE AND
WE ARE STRANGE AND

AUDIO: VOICES / DRUMS
MUSIC COME UP



MS: ANOTHER
WORLD

FIGURE LOOKING
DOWN AT FIRST
SLOWLY LOOKS UP
& SEES A GROUP
OF RED FLAGS
FLIPPING GENTLY
IN THE DISTANCE

AUDIO: WIND

1-100
1-100



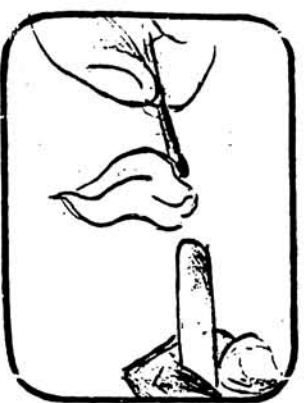
As he approaches
Flays - Flapping
gets more violent &
he gets wrapped in
them as they turn to blood



He desperately
wipes his face
of blood only
to find that it is
sweet



Pulls out a
cigarette, his
hands shaking



WAITRESS
lights his
cigarette



His eyes key on
the flame -
he is lost again



Inferno!



A rope drops
into frame -
Symbol of a
chance!



Hands reach
up from the
flames - reach
for rope



Hands grab
rope fully



Hands start
climbing



climbing
upward toward
light



confidence
builds



UH OH -
Rope suddenly
Slack



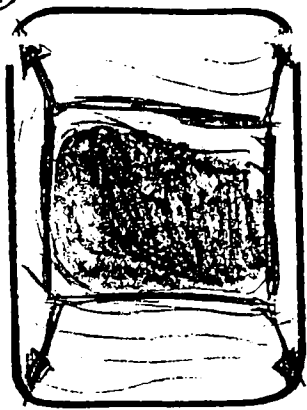
Rope Frays



Desperate
attempt to
hurry past
break



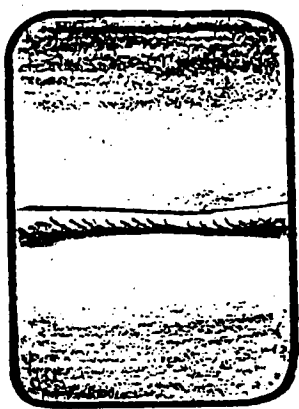
Fraying



CU INSIDE
MOUTH
EXTREMELY
FAST DOLL
OUT



Hands completely
let go - just as
last strand of rope
passes through -
Both go out bottom



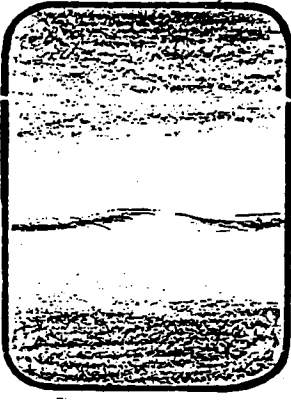
1 strand
left!



hands pull
off of rope
with defiance



Fraying
slows



Rope breaks



Desperate
climb



Dolly out
to man
hanging

REFERENCES

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